



Sussex County Emergency Medical Services

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MEDIA RELEASE

SUSSEX COUNTY EMS TO PURCHASE NEW EQUIPMENT TO SAVE LIVES

For Immediate Release:

May 22, 2009

MR 09-07

[Georgetown, DE] – Sussex County EMS is once again living up to its charge of providing “quality service.”

Thanks to a Sussex County Council decision on Tuesday, May 19, 2009, 11 cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) assist devices will be purchased for all primary Paramedic Response Units in the county. The devices automatically perform CPR chest compressions on patients, enabling paramedics, EMTs and firefighters in moving ambulances to remain safely buckled in their seats and focused on other aspects of patient care.

The purchase makes Sussex County EMS the first agency in Delaware to purchase and use such technology.

“These devices will improve survival rates for our patients while improving the safety of our public safety workers,” said Sussex County EMS Director Glenn Luedtke. “The CPR-assist devices perform mechanical chest compressions that take the place of manual CPR. American Heart Association research has demonstrated that patients who suffer cardiac arrests have shown better survival rates when these devices have been used in place of manual CPR.”

The American Heart Association also has shown through its research that most people cannot perform CPR effectively after one or two minutes, due mostly to fatigue. That often forces acute-care providers to routinely switch positions when performing manual CPR, which could result in decreased efficiency and lost time.

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This new device allows for uninterrupted, continuous chest compressions, and can be used in a moving ambulance, making it safer for the emergency medical technicians, paramedics, firefighters, or police who would be tending to the patient.

The total cost of the project is approximately \$167,000, with Sussex County funding a little more than \$90,000. The balance will be made up with funds from the State of Delaware. The new devices could be in use later this summer.

Sussex County EMS participated in two separate equipment trials in 2008. During those tests, CPR-assist devices were used during cardiac arrests when the units were available. Although not a scientific study, cardiac arrest victims, on average, experienced an increased rate of spontaneous circulation, meaning patients had a return of pulse after already suffering cardiac arrest.

County leaders said purchasing the devices, despite recent budget constraints, demonstrates the County's continuing commitment to public safety.

"Even in these financially difficult times, the Sussex County Council recognizes that we must still provide our paramedics with the latest state-of-the-art equipment so they can provide the best care for our residents and visitors," County Administrator David B. Baker said. "This life-saving equipment will not only improve our survival rates for those who suffer from cardiac arrest, but it will improve the safety of our dedicated public safety workers as they perform CPR in less-than-ideal circumstances."

"This ensures that Sussex County EMS continues its mission of caring people providing quality service," Mr. Baker said.

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